

# Twinflower

Volume 16:1 Fall 2004

Newsletter of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum



The crew from Blomquist Design setting the boulders of the new waterfall garden.

## The Rush of the Water at Linnaeus Arboretum

by Dean Wahlund, executive secretary

During the summer months Linnaeus Arboretum welcomes hundreds of visitors. And this summer has been no exception. You see people all over. "Fast walkers" move briskly around the 1.4 miles of trails; a local garden club spends time at the rose garden; a young couple huddles together on the bench overlooking a wetlands pond; first-time visitors review the self-guided tour brochure near the arbor entrance; and since mid-August everyone is stopping to admire the newest addition to the formal section of the arboretum ... a waterfalls garden!

Thanks to a generous gift from Dave, Gustavus Class of 1951, and Delores Johnson to cover the cost of construction and landscaping, in addition to endowment resources for care and maintenance far into the future, we now enjoy a waterfalls garden across the sidewalk from the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. The Johnsons of Golden Valley, who are both board members of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, are truly enamored with this magnificent landscaping concept, having built two waterfalls gardens themselves, one at their previous residence on Cutacross Road and recently at their new home on Skyline Drive.

The plans for the Linnaeus waterfalls are a creation of landscape design artist Charlie Blomquist, who has over 40 years of experience recreating

*Waterfalls* continued on page 6



Dave and Delores Johnson pose beside the finished waterfalls garden.

### In this issue ...

Arbor Month recap 2

Gilbert's Phenology 3

New Oak and Lilac Planted 4

Arbor Month Scrapbook 5

New Meditation Area 6

Biederman's new book 7



## Linnaeus Arboretum Board Members 2004

Ann Basset, Saint Peter, MN (president)  
Judy Biederman, Saint Peter, MN (past president)  
Paul Dumdei, Saint Peter, MN  
Joan Eckberg, Minneapolis, MN (on leave)  
Denise Fleming, North Oaks, MN  
Frank Gamelin, Saint Peter, MN  
Don Gordon, North Mankato, MN  
Don Gustafson, Saint Peter, MN  
Dale Haack, Saint Peter, MN  
Byron Hanson, Minneapolis, MN  
Bob Isenberg, Saint Peter, MN (secretary)  
Elder Jackson, Saint Peter, MN  
Brian Johnson, Saint Peter, MN  
Cindy Johnson-Groh, Saint Peter, MN  
David and Delores Johnson, Golden Valley, MN  
(vice president)  
Goldie Johnson, Wyoming, MN  
Bea Martinson, Saint Peter, MN  
Harriet and Charles Mason, Saint Peter, MN  
(treasurer)  
Bob and Kay Moline, Saint Peter, MN  
Leslie Nielsen, Hastings, MN  
Robert Peterson, Saint Peter, MN  
Mary Rehwalder, Apple Valley, MN  
Mary Solberg, Saint Peter, MN  
Loreli Steuer, Edina, MN  
Fred Struck, Saint Peter, MN  
Jane Thompson, Saint Peter, MN  
Melanie Thornberg, Walhalla, ND  
Joe Volk, Saint Peter, MN  
Evelyn Young, Edina, MN

### Ex Officio

Jim Gilbert, executive director,  
Linnaeus Arboretum  
Dean Wahlund, executive secretary,  
Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum  
Jim Isaak, Institutional Advancement liaison



This newsletter is published two times during the academic year by the Office of Public Relations, Gustavus Adolphus College, under the supervision of Dean Wahlund, director of special events and executive secretary of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, and Don Gustafson, newsletter editor. For further information about Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum membership and activities, contact Dean Wahlund (phone: 507/933-7520; e-mail: publicrelations@gustavus.edu).

May 7, 2004

## Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum Arbor Month Celebration

by Jim Gilbert, executive director

Our featured speaker for the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum "Arbor Month" luncheon was Dr. Gary Johnson, professor of urban and community forestry, University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources. Gary, who studied damaged trees here in St. Peter after the 1998 tornado, grew up wanting to be a forester. Eleanor Roosevelt, who helped design Greenbelt, Maryland, is one of his heroes.

Trees are important for many reasons. In an urban environment they add much beauty as they bring something alive to the bricks, cement, pavement, and whole buildings. As Gary stated, "The urban forest softens our environment," making it more livable for us humans. When thinking about trees in our urban environment, Gary considers small towns also to be urban. Some of the threats to trees in our urban forests are storms, diseases, de-icing salt, and growing too close to sidewalks and other structures so as to limit the area for root growth. Remember, there is as much tree mass below ground as above.

In his talk, Gary listed his top ten trees for planting in urban forests of southern and central Minnesota. They are:

bur oak	white pine
sugar maple	northern white cedar
Ohio buckeye	larch (the native tamarack, European or Japanese larch)
Japanese tree lilac	white fir
crabapples	Norway spruce
(many excellent varieties)	



**Arbor Month speaker Dr. Gary Johnson checked the health of a birch tree in the Arboretum during his visit to campus in May.**

## Autumn Warmer Event is Set

*Save the date* and join arboretum friends for "Linnaeus Arboretum through the Seasons," a wonderful digital slide presentation by local photographer Anders Björling, on Sunday, October 24, at 1:30 p.m. in the Melva Lind Interpretive Center.

# September and October Happenings

a Fall Phenology by Jim Gilbert



*Autumn is a  
second spring  
when every leaf  
is a flower.*

~ Albert Camus



*October's poplars  
are flaming  
torches lighting  
the way  
to winter.*

~ Nova Bair

Linnaeus Arboretum is always open. Come and enjoy the gardens, trails, benches, prairie, wetlands, and forests. There is always something to discover.

Listed below are a few observations from a year ago in the Arboretum and close vicinity. These events can be used to anticipate upcoming September and October happenings, and will help to compare this year with last.

## September 2003

- 1 It's dry. We need rain! Wetland and lake water levels down, and roadside grasses and other plants are tan brown. Farm crops such as corn and soybeans damaged by the dry conditions.
  - 2 First New England aster flowers open today—a favorite of the migrating monarch butterflies.
  - 7 Annual cicadas buzz loudly on these warm days.
  - 12 Finally the rains came; Linnaeus Arboretum received 2.14 inches since Sept. 10, and already the lawns look greener and pond levels are way up. Painted lady butterflies continue to be very numerous; we see them nectaring on purple coneflower, sedum, and more.
  - 19 Field corn being combined near Cleveland. Farmers continue chopping corn and combining soybeans. Pumpkins are orange. Fallgold and Fallred raspberries are ripe.
  - 26 Virginia creeper vines at fall color peak. The foliage is mostly red. Also, some nice reds on sugar maples and sumacs, yellows on leaves of the wild grape and boxelder, and golden yellows on eastern cottonwoods and green ashes.
  - 30 First frost. Begonias and tomato plants nipped.
- October is usually the month of clear skies. We expect frost several times and Indian Summer days after the frosts. Our deciduous forests become quite bare and field corn is harvested.

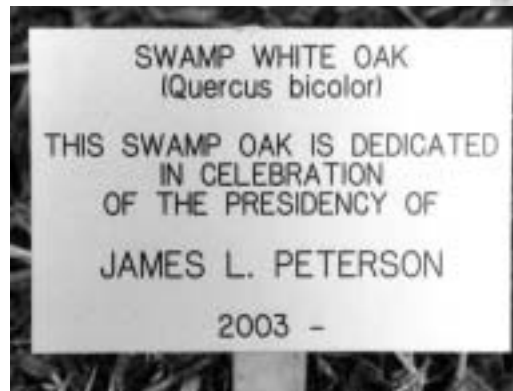
## October 2003

- 1 First ice on birdbaths. Second frost. Coleus, cosmos, begonias, and canna lilies killed. Southern Minnesota farmers are combining soybeans and corn, and cutting alfalfa. Tower and Silver Bay received one inch of snow.
- 5 Spectacular fall colors along the North Shore, over to Mille Lacs Lake and Brainerd. Asian lady beetles numerous in southern Minnesota.
- 7 High temperature of 85 degrees F. Overall fall color peak from Twin Cities to St. Peter.
- 16 Red oaks show beautiful foliage in reds and rich browns.
- 19 Here in southern Minnesota, deciduous forest areas have lost so many leaves that woodlands are looking quite bare, and yet there are pockets of fall color on the landscape.
- 21 Garden mums showy. Connel Red, Fireside, Keepsake, and Regent are some of the late season apple varieties still being picked.
- 25 First snow flurries. Tamarack trees have striking smoky-gold foliage. Migrating flocks of American robins feed on crabapple fruit.
- 31 Lingering fall colors include reds on Boston ivy, and golden-yellow foliage on Lombardy poplars and Norway maples.



# President's Tree Dedicated

Last April, as part of Inauguration Weekend festivities, a swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*) was dedicated in celebration of the presidency of James L. Peterson in the President's Oak Grove at Linnaeus Arboretum. Jim Peterson is the 14th president in the 142-year history of Gustavus Adolphus College. Dean Wahlund, executive secretary of the Friends; Jim Gilbert, executive director of Linnaeus Arboretum, and Warren Beck, chair of the board of trustees participated in the ceremony. Chaplains Brian Johnson and Rachel Larson gave the blessing for both the oak tree and a near-budding trio of common purple lilacs (*Syringa Vulgaris* L.) honoring Susan Pepin Peterson. Nearly 100 friends, colleagues, and relatives gathered for the dedication service including grandson Sam Eklund, who enthusiastically helped Jim and Susan water the plants and tree. The Presidents' Oak Grove and the First Ladies' Lilac Walk were a gift of former First Lady Loreli Steuer.



*Service*  
*Justice*

*Faith*

*Community*

*Excellence*



# Arbor Month Celebration



Above: Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum executive secretary Dean Wahlund interviews Bill Larsen, Gustavus landscape specialist, during the blessing of the flower beds on Eckman Mall. For nearly 17 years, Larsen has worked with Mother Nature and campus staff to design the annual and perennial beds and tend to literally thousands of trees and shrubs. Bill, in his modest way, indicated that he will plant and nurture close to 15,000 annuals each year. When asked about the color scheme and the plant selections for Eckman Mall this spring, he said, "I'm sorry, but that is still a secret!" He did mention that his favorite tropical plants, the towering banana plants, would be introduced again this year. The interview was cut short because Bill was anxious to get back to "turning the soil beds" in preparation for planting within the next few days.



Above: Linnaeus Arboretum Director Jim Gilbert addresses the luncheon audience with his always informative and educational tidbits on what is happening in the Arboretum. Subjects for this lesson were the larch or native tamarack, flowering crabapple, and bluebells.



Left: Former arboretum director Charles Mason, landscape specialist Bill Larsen, rose garden specialist Dennis Witte, grounds superintendent Bruce Volek, past Melva Lind Interpretive Center coordinator Harriet Mason, and arboretum specialist Tracy Glass entertain each other with stories of Linnaeus Arboretum through the years at the Arbor Month luncheon in Alumni Hall.

pictures on pages 4 and 5 by  
Friends member Goldie Johnson



# Welcome to the new meditation area

by Don Gustafson, board member

Our arboretum continues to grow. The trees are taller; the bushes are getting bushier; the prairie is simply awesome. And what is occurring naturally is accompanied by some carefully planned human additions, one of the most recent being the Meditation Area.

For years a meditation spot has been a dream and a pet project of Gretchen Koehler, a just-retired faculty member and a one-time member of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum board. For one reason or another, it had never worked out until now; however, the passing of time and the perseverance and patience of Gretchen have now resulted in what may well become for many one of the most meaningful spots in the entire arboretum.

At first look, the area appears to be just another pleasant spot in the Arboretum just off the path heading south and west of the wetlands, but if one is particularly perceptive—or has picked up the really

splendid brochure in the Interpretative Center—one realizes that this area did not just happen. As the brochure indicates, “The Meditation Area was designed using Chinese elements and feng shui concepts to foster inspirational and intuitive introspection. ... The curved entry path, circular flow, and dominant center are all feng shui design concepts that draw those who use the arboretum trails into the area.” There are “Entry Rocks” and “Focus Rocks” and native landscape plants along with some established white spruce, red cedar, and red pine trees.

This handsome addition to the Arboretum was made possible by not only the push but also the financial contribution of Professor Koehler, as well as of Connie Fortin, Roman Rowan, and former Gustavus yoga and t'ai chi students. A “by invitation” dedication of the Meditation Area will occur on September 12. 🌿



photos by Gretchen Koehler

## Gardener and Friend of Linnaeus Arboretum Dies

Lloyd “Holly” Hollingsworth, a longtime board member of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, died August 10, 2004 in St. Peter at the age of 92. He was an avid vegetable gardener who shared his produce with friends and neighbors and also taught master gardening classes. For several years, Holly tended the gardens surrounding the Borgeson Cabin in Linnaeus Arboretum. He was a legendary football coach, visionary athletics director, and respected professor of health sciences at Gustavus for over three decades.

## Waterfalls from page 1

naturalistic water landscapes. As landscape foreman, Jeff Moe of Blomquist Design led a talented group of artist/workers in constructing the waterfalls garden.

This new nature-inspired landscape features boulders brought to the St. Peter area by glaciers more than 10,000 years ago. Jeff and his crew hand-selected each rock from quarry sites across the Minnesota River near Ottawa. Dave and Delores joined Jeff in selecting plant materi-

als including weeping larch, Japanese maple, a rich variety of junipers and yews, Siberian iris, spiderwort, violet blazing star, hydrangea, and prairie grasses. What a wonderful spectacle!

On Saturday, October 2, 2004, we will honor Dave and Delores as we formally dedicate the waterfalls garden at a special ceremony beginning at 10:45 a.m. at Linnaeus Arboretum. Friends of the Johnsons and of Gustavus are welcome to join us for the dedication! 🌿



Former biology instructor writes children's book

# Squirrely Start

by Amanda Dyslin, *Free Press* staff writer



Shelly Abitz's conception of Bushy Tail Squirrel.

**Editor's note:** The following article first appeared in the July 26, 2004 *Mankato Free Press* and is reprinted here with their permission.

She got the idea for her story from fairy tales her dad told her when she was little about a bushy-tailed squirrel.

It was a long time ago, so she doesn't remember many details about the squirrel or his adventures. But that's probably a good thing, since the squirrel Judy McPherson Biederman wanted to depict was nothing like the one her father described.

"I'm a biologist and I like things to be scientifically accurate," Biederman said. "I didn't want the squirrel to talk. I didn't want him to have human characteristics."

Biederman's book is about a squirrel who leaves his nest for the first time, gets scared but returns home safely. The squirrel also has a sister, Shadow Tail, because most squirrels in nature have siblings, she said.

A page in the book is dedicated to facts about gray squirrels and there's a blank page near the end on which kids are encouraged to draw their own squirrels.

Biederman said she started writing the book in 1995 and struggled to find a publisher when she was finished, as do most first-time authors. Biederman finally decided to team up with a local publisher, Dr. Schelli McCabe of St. Peter, who also had difficulty finding a publisher for her children's books.

McCabe started her own publishing company in St. Peter, Waterfall Ridge Publishing Company, and agreed to work with Biederman. The women found an illustrator, Shelly Abitz, in an art class at South Central Technical College who drew the perfect squirrel to go along with the story.

"My best drawings are stick people," Biederman said. "Her squirrel looks like a squirrel, yet it would appeal to children. There's a little personality to it. She took the concept with the story and really did well with what I had in mind. *Bushy Tail Squirrel's First Day Out* is available at the Book Mark on the Gustavus campus, Enchanted Forest in Mankato, and Sterling Drug in Fairmont, among other locations.



**Judy McPherson Biederman of St. Peter (right) signed copies of her book, *Bushy Tail Squirrel's First Day Out*, at the Arts Center of Saint Peter recently. Biederman, who worked in the biology department at Gustavus Adolphus College for 15 years, and is past president of the Linnaeus Arboretum board, wrote the book about the squirrel as scientifically accurate as possible. Shelly Abitz of Fairmont (standing in the center) is the illustrator.**

Bushy Tail Squirrel illustration courtesy of Shelly Abitz and Judy Biederman.

Biederman released her first children's book Sunday, July 25, called *Bushy Tail Squirrel's First Day Out*. It's got the usual components of a kid's story—adventure, conflict and, of course, a happy ending.

But Biederman's main character, Bushy Tail Squirrel, was more influenced by her former career as a biology instructor at Gustavus Adolphus College than any fairy tale she'd ever heard.